# Annolighting a Text

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| **Use this Strategy:**  Before Reading  **During Reading**  **After Reading** |  | **Targeted Reading Skills:**   Formulate questions in response to text   Analyze and interpret elements of poetry or prose   Draw conclusions and make inferences based on explicit (literal) and implicit (figurative) meaning |

***What is it?***

We have all had the experience of suggesting that students highlight the text that they are reading, only to watch them indiscriminately highlight nearly every word on the page. It is clear that learning how to highlight a text as a part of a reading strategy requires some instruction, including some modeling and guided practice. If done well, highlighting can become a very effective reading tool; if done poorly, it is most likely a waste of a student’s time, energy and ink. "Annolighting" a text combines effective highlighting with marginal annotations that help to explain the highlighted words and phrases.

The following lists provide a simple set of goals and guidelines that students could use to increase the effectiveness of their annolighting and, as a result, improve their comprehension and understanding of a text.

**Purposes/Goals of Annolighting**

    Capture main ideas / key concepts / details of a reading

    Target, reduce and distill the needed information from a text

    Cut down on study and review time when you return to the material increasing your effective and efficient use of time and effort

    Strengthen your reading comprehension

***What does it look like?***

1. Choose a focus or framework for your highlighting. Ask yourself: What is the purpose or intended goal of this particular reading? (e.g. Main ideas only? Supportive details for an interpretive claim you are making? Definitions and examples of key vocabulary? Culling examples of the writer’s craft? etc.) After you determine the focus, highlight only the targeted information.

2.      If possible, do not highlight on a first reading of a text. Rather, divide a page into manageable chunks and read a section once. Then skim the section again and highlight on the second reading. If you try to highlight on the first reading, you may not have a clear sense of the key ideas/concepts or important/relevant details.

3.      *Eliminate every single unnecessary word* in a sentence by using a "telegraphic" approach to highlighting. "Telegraphic highlighting" should still allow you to make sense of a sentence or section when you reread it. It may sound picky to take 6—20 words out of each sentence, but the longer the reading, the more it will cut down on unnecessary information as well as re-read time when you return to your highlighted text for review. *Rarely* should you highlight entire sentences unless it is absolutely necessary based on your targeted focus.

4.      You may want to use multiple colors in your highlighting process. For instance, choose one color for main ideas and another color for supportive detail that may help in sorting the information when you study the material or collect information for a paper, exhibition or project. You may want to use a color to indicate facts or concepts on which you would like clarification or pose as questions.

Below is an excerpt of a reading titled, *Shakespeare’s Hamlet and the Nature of Tragedy.*Students were asked to identify the basic elements of tragedy in regard to the hero or protagonist. Note the "telegraphic approach" to the highlighting; when the highlights are read, they should make sense to the reader. Notes on the right side represent possible summary annotations.

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| Highlighted Text | Reader Annotations |
| "Towards the end of the sixteenth century, a new tragic pattern began to emerge, very much richer and deeper than the old one, sounding intimately the depths of the human mind and spirit, the moral possibilities of human behavior, and displaying the extent to which men’s destinies are interrelated one with another.  According to this scheme, an ideal tragedy would concern the career of a hero, a man great and admirable in both his powers and opportunities. He should be a person high enough placed in society that his actions affectthe well being of many people. The plot should show him engaged in important or urgent affairs and should involve his immediate community in a threat to its security that will be removed only at the end of the action through his death. The hero’s action will involve him in choices of some importance which, however virtuous or vicious in themselves, begin the spinning of a web of circumstances unforeseen by the hero which cannot thenbe halted and which brings about his downfall. This hostile destiny may be the result of mere circumstance or ill luck, of the activities of the hero’s enemies, of some flaw or failing in his own character, of the operation of somesupernatural agency that works against him. When it is too late to escape from the web, the hero-victim comes torealize everything that has happened to him, and in the despair or agony of that realization, is finally destroyed." | **The hero/protagonist:**         Admirable         High society         Actions affect many         Makes choices that involve him/her in a web of circumstances  **Caused by:**         Mere circumstance         Ill luck         Enemies         Character flaw         Supernatural agency  **Results:**         Realizes too late         Creates despair         Destruction or death |

***How could I use, adapt or differentiate it?***

* Sometimes, I would ask students to take home a copied reading and highlight only the first few pages. The next day in class, in partners or small groups, they would briefly show what they highlighted. More often than not, they would highlight far too much without any frame of reference. I would then go over the*Guidelines for Effective Annolighting* and give them some time for guided practice in class. For homework, they would complete the annolighting on the rest of the reading.
* As suggested earlier, you may want them to practice differentiating between main ideas/key concepts and specific details by having them use two different colors in the annolighting process.
* Consider using this strategy with the annotating acronyms associated with the "[Annotating a Text](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ELA/6-12/Reading/Reading%20Strategies/annotating%20a%20text.htm)" reading strategy.

# Annotating a Text

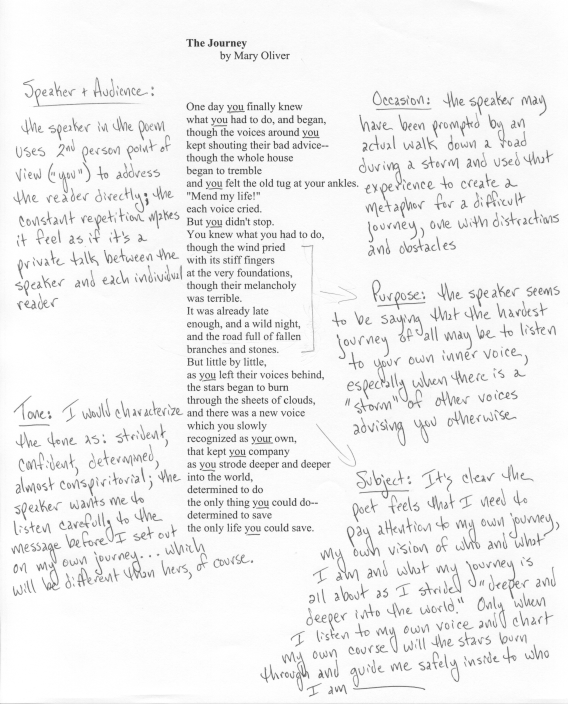
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| **Use this Strategy:**   Before Reading  **During Reading**  **After Reading** |  | **Targeted Reading Skills:**   Formulate questions in response to text   Analyze and interpret elements of poetry or prose   Draw conclusions and make inferences based on explicit (literal) and implicit (figurative) meaning |

***What is it?***

Reading and constructing meaning from a text is a complex and active process; one way to help students slow down and develop their critical analysis skills is to teach them to annotate the text as they read.  What students annotate can be limited by a list provided by the teacher or it can be left up to the student’s discretion.  Suggestions for annotating text can include labeling and interpreting literary devices (metaphor, simile, imagery, personification, symbol, alliteration, metonymy, synecdoche, etc.); labeling and explaining the writer’s rhetorical devices and elements of style (tone, diction, syntax, narrative pace, use of figurative language, etc.); or labeling the main ideas, supportive details and/or evidence that leads the reader to a conclusion about the text.  Of course, annotations can also include questions that the reader poses and connections to other texts that reader makes while reading.

***What does it look like?***

The way a reader chooses to interact with a text will vary from reader to reader, but here is an example of a poem that has been annotated:



***How could I use, adapt or differentiate it?***

* Have students complete this activity individually or with a partner as a way to prepare for a discussion and/or a writing prompt.
* To differentiate, teachers can annotate some of the more difficult parts of a text to aid the students, begin the annotation with the entire class to get them started, or form heterogeneous or homogeneous groups based on skill levels and the teacher’s discretion for the best way to proceed.
* Refer to the other annotation activities ([Questions Only](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ELA/6-12/Reading/Reading%20Strategies/questions%20only.htm) and [Collaborative Annotation](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ELA/6-12/Reading/Reading%20Strategies/collaborative%20annotation.htm)) depending on the objective of the lesson.
* Acronyms can provide students with helpful reminders about different things to consider when annotating text.  Click on any of the acronyms below to learn more about each one:

# Collaborative Annotation

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| **Use this Strategy:**  Before Reading  **During Reading**  **After Reading** |  | **Targeted Reading Skills:**    Recognize the features of different literary genres  Make inferences and draw conclusions based on explicit and implied information |

***What is it?***

This is a technique that is used after students have already completed their own individual annotations on a poem or prose passage; it is a great strategy to stimulate a small or large group discussion that engages and honors different perspectives on the same text. In groups of 3-5, students pass their annotated copy to the person on the right. Each individual focuses on, and makes additions to, the original reader’s commentary; the next time the papers pass, each individual adds his/her commentary to both of the previous readers’ commentary and this process continues until the original reader has his/her paper back. Thus, each student has had three or four people build and expand on his/her ideas; this is a powerful way to encourage engagement and group participation. (Note: It is important that students understand that they are to expand on the original reader’s ideas and/or questions, not simply add what ideas they had on their papers.)

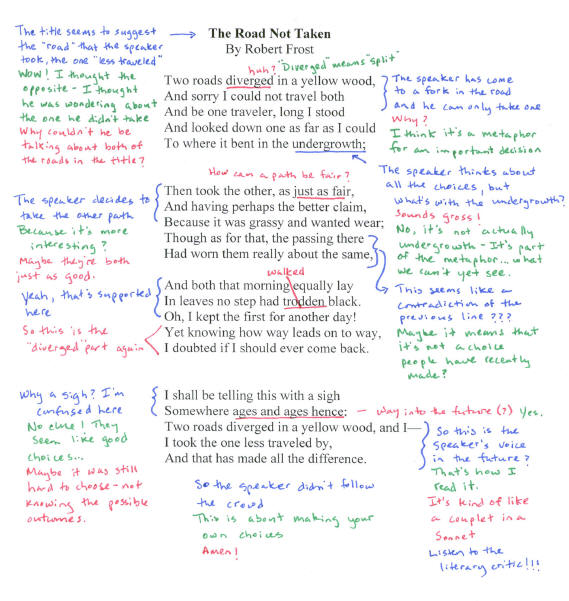
***What does it look like?***

Click on the related file below to view a model of one student’s paper after two others added their collaborative annotations; each color represents a different student's annotations.

***How could I use, adapt or differentiate it?***

         Each student can simply underline and label several different examples of a single literary or rhetorical device, and the students that follow must create the interpretation or rationale for each example. For instance, student #1 identifies several effective diction choices, student #2 identifies several different images that contribute to the meaning of the poem, and student #3 identifies a number of effective uses of punctuation; as the papers pass, the other two students must interpret and/or explain the writer’s rationale for the identified examples, building on each other’s ideas. (Note: student #1 only identifies and labels, but does no interpretation or rationale)

         When teachers are developing mini-lessons on a newly introduced literary or rhetorical device, they can create their own annotated models for illustrative purposes. (note: Whenever possible, use a poem or passage that students have already studied or are currently studying as the basis for the model.)



# RAFT: Role, Audience, Format, Topic

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| **Use this Strategy:**  Before Reading  During Reading  **After Reading** |  | **Targeted Reading Skills:**  Understand the relationship between literature and its historical, social, and cultural contexts  Analyze and interpret elements of character development |

***What is it?***

This is a great strategy that integrates reading and writing in a non-traditional way.  It asks that students take what they have read and create a new product that illustrates their depth of understanding; it may be used with fiction or nonfiction texts.  The format is incredibly flexible and offers limitless opportunities for creativity for both you and your students.  When you are first using a “RAFT” with your students, you will develop the specifics for each element in the acronym; they are as follows:

**Role:** In developing the final product, what role will the students need to “take on”?   Writer?  Character (in the novel)?  Artist?  Politician?  Scientist?

**Audience:**Who should the students consider as the audience for the product?  Other students?  Parents?  Local community?  School board?  Other characters in the text?

**Format:**What is the best product that will demonstrate the students’ in-depth understanding of their interactions with the text?  A writing task?  Art work?  Action plan?  Project?

**Topic:**This is the *when, who,* or *what* that will be the focus/subject of the final product. Will it take place in the same time period as the novel?  Who will be the main focus of the product?  What event will constitute the centerpiece of the action?

***What does it look like?***

A teacher assigns (or students select) a role, audience, format, and topic from a range of possibilities.  Below is a chart with a few examples in each of the categories; it is meant only as a sampling to spark new ideas and possibilities for building RAFTS:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Audience** | **Format** | **Topic** |
|              writer               artist               character               scientist               adventurer               inventor               juror               judge               historian               reporter               rebel               therapist |              self               peer group               government               parents               fictional character               committee               jury               judge               activists               immortality               animals or             objects |              journal               editorial              brochure/booklet               interview               video               song lyric               cartoon               game               primary            document               critique               biographical             sketch           news article |          issue relevant to the text or time period           topic of personal interest or concern for the role or audience           topic related to an essential question |

***How could I use, adapt or differentiate it?***

* This strategy is great for differentiation; teachers (and students) can develop any number of possible RAFT’s based on the same text that can be adjusted for skill level and rigor.
* Paula Rutherford’s book, *Instruction for All Students*, offers a comprehensive list of “Products and Perspectives from which to chose.
* The RAFT strategy can be used as a prewriting strategy and/or as a strategy for helping students prepare for a small or large group discussion.

# SQP2RS (“Squeepers”)

**Survey:** Preview text.

**Question:** List 1-3 questions you think we’ll find answers to.

**Predict:** State 1-3 things we’ll learn.

**Read:** Read text.

**Respond:** Try to answer questions. Modify, drop, add.

**Summarize:** At end of text.

***S* is for Survey**

* Look at the pictures and captions.
* Read the highlighted and bold words.
* Read the headings and subheadings.
* Think about what you are about to read.

***Q* is for Question**

* What questions will we answer?
* Generate questions that we will be able to answer after we read.

***P* is for Predict**

* What will we learn?
* Predict 1 to 3 things we will learn while reading.

***R* is for Read**

Read the text along...

* With teacher
* With partner
* With group

***R* is for Respond**

*Which questions were answered?*

* Discuss which questions were answered in the text.
* Review which questions were not answered.
* Eliminate questions that are not likely to be answered.
* Develop new questions.
* Continue surveying process.

***S* is for Summarize**

* What did we learn?
* Summarize what we have learned.
* Orally/Written

## Example of SQP2RS note-taking process

**Name/Names \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Title of Article or Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Survey:** (*Before you read*. What will this reading assignment be about? Look at titles and pictures) |  |
| **Question:** (*Before you read*. Write 1-3 questions you may be able to answer from reading) | 1.  2.  3. |
| **Predict:** (*Before you read*. Can you predict 1-3 things we will learn?) | 1.  2.  3. |
| **Read!** | (you don’t have to write anything in this box) |
| **Respond** (*After you Read.* Try to answer questions: modify, drop, and add) |  |
| **Summarize**: (*After you Read*)  Four Sentence Summary:  **Sentence 1:** Main Idea (identify what was read, verb *[explains, lists, argues, describes, etc],* finish thought).  **Ex.** *The novel Beloved by Toni Morrison, chronicles the tragic life of a runaway slave.*  **Sentences 2-4:** *D’REF*: Details, Reasons, Examples, Facts | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

# Key Concept Synthesis

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| **Use this Strategy:**  Before Reading  **During Reading**  **After Reading** |  | **Targeted Reading Skills:**  Condense or summarize ideas from one or more texts  Distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information  Compare/contrast information from one or more texts  Make text-to-text, text-to-self, and/or text-to-world connections |

***What is it?***

When students are given “dense” reading material, they often become frustrated and remark, “I read it, but I don’t get it!” or “I didn’t know what was important and what wasn’t.”  For many young readers, this frustration builds and they approach difficult texts feeling defeated before they even begin.  One strategy we can use is to provide a framework for the reading by creating a focus on the key concepts.  The process involves identifying the key concepts as they read, putting those concepts in their own words and explaining why the concept is important and/or making connections to other concepts.

***What does it look like?***

Using this strategy requires helping students to use a number of textual clues that will help them determine the key concepts in a reading.  Some elements that will aid students in the identification of key concepts are:

* Examining the text structure for any elements that the writer/publisher may have used to indicate major divisions in the subject matter (e.g. titles, subtitles, bold headings, and supportive graphics or visuals)
* Determining which sentence in a paragraph is the topic sentence; as texts get more sophisticated, students need to recognize that frequently it may not be the first sentence in the paragraph.
* Learning to identify statements that “forecast” main ideas or key concepts that will come at some point later on in the reading.
* Recognizing that transitions may sometimes help to identify a main idea or a possible shift in the writer’s thinking.  (e.g. *when compared to*, or *another possibility is*, or*in contrast*, etc.)
* Examining the summary statements in the paragraphs and/or the conclusions that summarize each section of the reading may help to verify and condense the main ideas or key concepts.

Providing models and guided practice where students have opportunities to identify and explain the above elements is crucial.  Once students can understand and recognize these elements, provide them with sections of the current text they are reading and have them practice independently as preparation for the next class.  As students become more proficient in recognizing these elements as they read, a powerful addition is to have them identify these elements in their own writing.

The graphic organizer below is a condensed version of the template that you can print off the web from *Tools for Reading, Writing and Thinking*.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
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[Click here for a printable version of this graphic organizer.](http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ELA/6-12/Tools/keyconceptsynthesis.PDF)

*H****ow could I use, adapt or differentiate it?***

* If this is a new strategy for your students, it is helpful to make copies of a section of the text so that they can highlight and annotate; this process alone will encourage a close reading of the text even before they complete the graphic organizer.
* When first using this strategy with your students, you may want to have them identify the various elements that helped them to zero in on the main ideas or key concepts.  This could be noted in the Key Concept column under the concept or in the margins of the annotated text.
* For students that are more visual and/or artistic, they may want to use a mind map to capture the key concepts and their connections.
* Once students have completed the graphic organizer, they can share their ideas with other students to discuss how/why they identified the key concepts they selected.